



FACT SHEET

Reporting Sewage Releases

March 2010

REPORTING SEWAGE RELEASES:

In the past, there have been occurrences where untreated sewage was released into drinking water sources and was not properly reported to the California Emergency Management Agency (Cal EMA). Proper and timely notification is imperative to allow government agencies and downstream users to take prompt action to protect public health and safety, the environment, and drinking water supplies. The purpose of this Fact Sheet is to help clarify the reporting requirements for sewage releases in California, under California Water Code §13271, *et seq.* and California Health and Safety Code §5411, *et seq.*

State Law requires that an unauthorized discharge of sewage [as defined in 23 California Code of Regulations (CCR) 2250 (b)] into or onto state waters must be reported to **Cal EMA**. Upon such notification, Cal EMA will then immediately notify the appropriate **Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB)**, the **local public health department**, and **local office of environmental health**. These offices are responsible for determining appropriate public and environmental safety measures.

Report Sewage Releases to:

California Emergency Management Agency
Warning Center
(800) 852-7550

The **Reportable Quantity** for sewage spills is **1000 gallons or more**, as established in regulation [23 CCR 2250 (a)]

Please note that the Regional Water Quality Control Boards and Local Health Departments may have **additional reporting requirements – please contact them to see what requirements apply to you!**

ARE THERE ANY EXCEPTIONS?

Notification of an unauthorized discharge of sewage or hazardous substances, under section 13271 (b) of the State Water Code, is not required if the discharge is in compliance with waste discharge requirements.

PENALTIES FOR NOT REPORTING:

Any person who fails to provide the proper notifications is guilty of a misdemeanor and may be punished by a fine of not more than \$20,000 dollars or imprisonment for not more than 1 year or both, per section 13271 (c) of the State Water Code. Additional penalties can be administered under Health and Safety Code §5411, *et seq.*

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Further information on reporting requirements can be located on the Cal EMA Website at www.calema.ca.gov in the *California Hazardous Material Spill/Release Notification Guidance* booklet. Please call the Cal EMA Hazardous Materials Unit at **(916) 845-8788** to answer any further questions.